

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method of authenticating a software application ~~license for use on a software of~~ a computer system, the method comprising the steps of: the computer system having an identifier, the software is associated with an engraved signature that is an encryption based on the identifier using an encryption method; the method of authenticating comprising

providing a software application for use on a computer system having an identifier, the software application including an associated engraved signature, the engraved signature being initially blank such that the software application can be authenticated for use on one of a plurality of computer systems;

reading the engraved signature;

if the engraved signature is not blank, then performing the following:

retrieving the identifier from the computer system;

encrypting the identifier using an encryption method to obtain a computed signature;

comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and

halting execution of the software application if ~~where~~ the computed signature does not match the engraved signature;

if the identifier is blank, then performing the following:

retrieving the identifier from the computer system;

encrypting the identifier using the encryption method to obtain a computed signature;

storing the computed signature as the engraved signature.

~~the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.~~

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the encryption ~~algorithm~~ method is called Block Cipher SQUARE.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of decrypting the engraved signature before comparing with the computed signature where the engraved signature has been encrypted.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3, wherein step of decrypting the engraved signature includes ~~has been encrypted and decrypted using another one-way encryption method~~algorithm.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".

6. (Currently amended) A software protection ~~system comprising~~system,  
~~comprising~~

a computer system having an identifier ~~and software;~~

a software application including an associated engraved signature, the engraved signature being initially blank such that the software application can be authenticated for use on one of a plurality of computer systems;

~~an engraved signature stored on the computer system; and~~

~~a program executed by the computer system for retrieving the engraved signature,~~

an authentication program executable by the computer system for authenticating the software application for use on the computer system, the authentication program for reading the engraved signature and,

if the engraved signature is not blank then performing the following:

retrieving the identifier from the computer system;

encrypting the identifier using an encryption method to obtain a computed signature;

comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and  
halting execution of the software application where the computed signature does not match the engraved signature;

if the engraved signature is blank then performing the following:

retrieving the identifier from the computer system;

encrypting the identifier using the encryption method to obtain a computed signature;

storing the computed signature as the engraved signature.

~~wherein the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.~~

7. (Currently amended) The system of claim 6, wherein the encryption ~~method~~algorithm is called Block Cipher SQUARE.
8. (Currently amended) The system of claim 6, further comprising the authentication program decrypting the engraved signature before comparing the engraved signature with the computed signature where the engraved signature has been encrypted.
9. (Currently amended) The system of claim 8, wherein the engraved signature has been encrypted and decrypted using another ~~one-way~~ encryption ~~method~~algorithm.
10. (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".
11. (Currently amended) An article, ~~comprising~~ comprising:  
a computer-readable signal-bearing medium including a ~~having~~ software application;  
the medium including an engraved signature for authenticating the software application for use on a computer system having an identifier, the engraved signature being initially blank such that the software application can be authenticated for use on one of a plurality of computer systems;  
~~means in the medium for engraving an engraved signature on a computer system having an identifier; and~~  
~~means recorded on the medium for retrieving the engraved signature from the computer system, retrieving the identifier from the computer system; encrypting the identifier using an encryption method to obtain a computed signature; comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and halting execution of the software where the computed signature does not match the engraved signature;~~  
~~wherein the encryption method is a one-way encryption algorithm.~~  
the medium including an authentication program for authenticating the software application for use on the computer system;

the authentication program for reading the engraved signature and,  
if the engraved signature is not blank then performing the following:  
retrieving the identifier from the computer system;  
encrypting the identifier using an encryption method to obtain a  
computed signature;  
comparing the computed signature to the engraved signature; and  
halting execution of the software application where the computed  
signature does not match the engraved signature;  
if the engraved signature is blank then performing the following:  
retrieving the identifier from the computer system;  
encrypting the identifier using the encryption method to obtain a  
computed signature;  
storing the computed signature as the engraved signature.

12. (Currently amended) The article of claim 11, wherein the encryption ~~method~~algorithm is called Block Cipher SQUARE.

13. (Currently amended) The article of claim 11, further comprising the authentication program decrypting the engraved signature before comparing with the computed signature where the engraved signature has been encrypted.

14. (Currently amended) The article of claim 13, wherein the authentication program includes another encryption method for decrypting the engraved signature. ~~wherein the engraved signature has been encrypted and decrypted using another one-way encryption algorithm.~~

15. (Original) The article of claim 11, wherein the identifier comprises at least one of a MAC address of a Network Interface Card, a serial number of a CPU, a hard drive format code number, and a code number of computer system "add-ons".